

Blackmore's argument:

- ESP is (probably) nonexistent.
- Even if ESP *does* exist, it provides no evidence for consciousness.

1
00:00:05,030 --> 00:00:02,600
lets you know that our first speaker is

2
00:00:07,160 --> 00:00:05,040
Paul Smith he's an alumnus of seven

3
00:00:10,009 --> 00:00:07,170
years in the military Stargate remote

4
00:00:12,339 --> 00:00:10,019
viewing program he's author of reading

5
00:00:15,350 --> 00:00:12,349
the enemy's mind inside Stargate

6
00:00:17,000 --> 00:00:15,360
America's psychic experience among other

7
00:00:19,429 --> 00:00:17,010
things he's the president and chief

8
00:00:22,099 --> 00:00:19,439
instructor of the for-profit remote

9
00:00:24,620 --> 00:00:22,109
viewing instructional services and is

10
00:00:27,410 --> 00:00:24,630
also this year's president of the

11
00:00:32,139 --> 00:00:27,420
nonprofit international remote viewing

12
00:00:50,360 --> 00:00:32,149
Association so Paul Smith yeah he's here

13
00:00:55,440 --> 00:00:53,580

okay can you hear me much your

14

00:00:58,200 --> 00:00:55,450

misfortune you can right all right

15

00:01:00,540 --> 00:00:58,210

remote control here okay word backwards

16

00:01:02,160 --> 00:01:00,550

laser pointer laser pointer that's this

17

00:01:08,460 --> 00:01:02,170

guy this red thing apparently okay

18

00:01:11,010 --> 00:01:08,470

excellent okay he'll give me five

19

00:01:15,540 --> 00:01:11,020

minutes three minute one minute warning

20

00:01:18,900 --> 00:01:15,550

exists I'm afraid of warnings okay why

21

00:01:20,400 --> 00:01:18,910

sigh is consciousnesses only hope I've

22

00:01:22,260 --> 00:01:20,410

changes title a little bit from what it

23

00:01:25,109 --> 00:01:22,270

says in your program both in light of

24

00:01:27,029 --> 00:01:25,119

the talk I'm responding to and further

25

00:01:29,639 --> 00:01:27,039

thoughts on exactly what the point was I

26

00:01:31,350 --> 00:01:29,649

was trying to make and the talk i'm

27

00:01:34,320 --> 00:01:31,360

responding to let's see if I can figure

28

00:01:37,680 --> 00:01:34,330

this out yes was given by Susan

29

00:01:38,969 --> 00:01:37,690

Blackmore back in 1996 her title was why

30

00:01:41,999 --> 00:01:38,979

sigh tells us nothing about

31

00:01:43,859 --> 00:01:42,009

consciousness now I pick on Susan even

32

00:01:46,200 --> 00:01:43,869

though this is what 12 years after the

33

00:01:49,980 --> 00:01:46,210

fact for a couple reasons first of all

34

00:01:52,740 --> 00:01:49,990

her perspective mirrors pretty much that

35

00:01:55,740 --> 00:01:52,750

about about consciousness the the same

36

00:01:58,550 --> 00:01:55,750

perspective this kind of events in the

37

00:02:02,700 --> 00:01:58,560

psychology and the philosophy of

38

00:02:04,260 --> 00:02:02,710

disciplines in general okay our concept

39

00:02:06,270 --> 00:02:04,270

is we'll see is a little bit broader

40

00:02:08,100 --> 00:02:06,280

than that but but she's got a pretty

41

00:02:10,109 --> 00:02:08,110

pretty straightforward academic view of

42

00:02:13,860 --> 00:02:10,119

consciousness and she's really the only

43

00:02:16,500 --> 00:02:13,870

one that's addressed this issue of sigh

44

00:02:21,990 --> 00:02:16,510

in relation to consciousness in a kind

45

00:02:24,360 --> 00:02:22,000

of a skeptical way her argument goes

46

00:02:27,390 --> 00:02:24,370

something like this first of all ESP is

47

00:02:29,370 --> 00:02:27,400

probably non-existent she doesn't come

48

00:02:32,600 --> 00:02:29,380

right out and declare it non-existent

49

00:02:35,640 --> 00:02:32,610

she started off life as a

50

00:02:37,319 --> 00:02:35,650

parapsychologist very much disposed to

51
00:02:39,000 --> 00:02:37,329
believing in it and then over a series

52
00:02:40,800 --> 00:02:39,010
of disappointing experiments concluded

53
00:02:43,199 --> 00:02:40,810
that there probably wasn't anything to

54
00:02:44,550 --> 00:02:43,209
it but they weren't inconclusive enough

55
00:02:48,840 --> 00:02:44,560
that she was ready to reject the

56
00:02:50,699 --> 00:02:48,850
hypothesis altogether that ESP exists so

57
00:02:52,860 --> 00:02:50,709
I'm not going to say much more about

58
00:02:56,250 --> 00:02:52,870
that part of her argument that site

59
00:02:58,620 --> 00:02:56,260
doesn't exist that's a whole topic in

60
00:03:01,250 --> 00:02:58,630
itself and most of us are of the other

61
00:03:04,460 --> 00:03:01,260
mind based on evidence that we've seen

62
00:03:07,520 --> 00:03:04,470
okay one thing I do want to comment and

63
00:03:09,530 --> 00:03:07,530

I read her book and I found it very a

64

00:03:11,119 --> 00:03:09,540

very sincere effort to try and get to

65

00:03:14,509 --> 00:03:11,129

the bottom of what her experiences were

66

00:03:16,250 --> 00:03:14,519

but i think that throughout it has the

67

00:03:20,089 --> 00:03:16,260

demonstrates the failing that many

68

00:03:23,119 --> 00:03:20,099

people get interested in ESP fall into

69

00:03:24,710 --> 00:03:23,129

and that is to lay too much faith in a

70

00:03:26,930 --> 00:03:24,720

certain paradigm relate too much faith

71

00:03:30,380 --> 00:03:26,940

in a certain way of thinking about it

72

00:03:32,599 --> 00:03:30,390

and not being ready or able or willing

73

00:03:33,890 --> 00:03:32,609

to branch out and consider things from a

74

00:03:35,839 --> 00:03:33,900

different perspective questions one

75

00:03:38,210 --> 00:03:35,849

question ones assumptions think of a

76

00:03:39,349 --> 00:03:38,220

different way of approaching it she

77

00:03:40,910 --> 00:03:39,359

seems to have gotten kind of locked into

78

00:03:42,920 --> 00:03:40,920

a certain perspective and that happened

79

00:03:47,180 --> 00:03:42,930

to be a perspective that didn't work and

80

00:03:48,920 --> 00:03:47,190

hence or disappointment okay so second

81

00:03:50,509 --> 00:03:48,930

part of argument is that even if ESP

82

00:03:53,869 --> 00:03:50,519

does exist and this should have been psy

83

00:03:56,479 --> 00:03:53,879

every time you see ESP thinks I even if

84

00:04:00,009 --> 00:03:56,489

ESP or site does exist it gives no

85

00:04:01,789 --> 00:04:00,019

evidence for consciousness and further

86

00:04:03,979 --> 00:04:01,799

neuroscience hasn't found any evidence

87

00:04:06,770 --> 00:04:03,989

of consciousness you they have found no

88

00:04:09,979 --> 00:04:06,780

location in the brain where where

89
00:04:13,129 --> 00:04:09,989
consciousness exists where consciousness

90
00:04:14,659 --> 00:04:13,139
is processed or whatever this is all

91
00:04:17,210 --> 00:04:14,669
more broadly known as the argument from

92
00:04:18,920 --> 00:04:17,220
physiology in the philosophy of mind the

93
00:04:20,920 --> 00:04:18,930
idea that science hasn't found anything

94
00:04:23,480 --> 00:04:20,930
that isn't physical in the brain and the

95
00:04:25,640 --> 00:04:23,490
conclusion is therefore we can safely

96
00:04:30,439 --> 00:04:25,650
presume that there is nothing that isn't

97
00:04:33,320 --> 00:04:30,449
physical in mental or or brain processes

98
00:04:35,150 --> 00:04:33,330
okay so this raises two questions that

99
00:04:37,640 --> 00:04:35,160
we have to kind of address first what is

100
00:04:39,830 --> 00:04:37,650
consciousness and there are a couple of

101
00:04:44,000 --> 00:04:39,840
answers to this one is the easy answer

102
00:04:47,629 --> 00:04:44,010
nobody knows the true answer is

103
00:04:49,750 --> 00:04:47,639
everybody knows but you just can't

104
00:04:51,920 --> 00:04:49,760
describe it or explain it to anyone else

105
00:04:53,960 --> 00:04:51,930
consciousness is a very profoundly

106
00:04:56,089 --> 00:04:53,970
subjective experience and anytime you

107
00:04:57,980 --> 00:04:56,099
try and explain what your conscious

108
00:04:59,600 --> 00:04:57,990
experience is like to someone else you

109
00:05:01,430 --> 00:04:59,610
find yourself having to rely on words

110
00:05:04,219 --> 00:05:01,440
that you hope have the same meaning of

111
00:05:06,350 --> 00:05:04,229
the person you're talking to as opposed

112
00:05:08,060 --> 00:05:06,360
to maybe they have a whole different

113
00:05:09,770 --> 00:05:08,070

understanding of what you're saying okay

114

00:05:11,420 --> 00:05:09,780

we never know that's part of the

115

00:05:14,180 --> 00:05:11,430

mind-body problem and the problem of

116

00:05:14,480 --> 00:05:14,190

other minds we assume other people have

117

00:05:16,070 --> 00:05:14,490

my

118

00:05:19,100 --> 00:05:16,080

mine's although often times when you're

119

00:05:22,430 --> 00:05:19,110

on the highway you're not so sure okay

120

00:05:25,040 --> 00:05:22,440

how do we define consciousness well this

121

00:05:27,400 --> 00:05:25,050

is a very vague sort of rough and ready

122

00:05:29,390 --> 00:05:27,410

definition I came up with on the fly

123

00:05:31,040 --> 00:05:29,400

everybody's got their own version of

124

00:05:32,870 --> 00:05:31,050

this but I'd say it's the mental

125

00:05:36,439 --> 00:05:32,880

experience of perceiving intending

126
00:05:37,610 --> 00:05:36,449
apprehending and attending to okay now

127
00:05:39,020 --> 00:05:37,620
there's lots of words in there that need

128
00:05:40,640 --> 00:05:39,030
further definition before you know what

129
00:05:42,830 --> 00:05:40,650
the heck I'm talking about so I'm going

130
00:05:45,740 --> 00:05:42,840
to defer to Susan here again for a

131
00:05:48,980 --> 00:05:45,750
moment and this is from another paper

132
00:05:51,379 --> 00:05:48,990
she wrote on consciousness and I'm going

133
00:05:53,719 --> 00:05:51,389
to read from this and you can see you

134
00:05:55,460 --> 00:05:53,729
can follow along she says I felt happily

135
00:05:57,050 --> 00:05:55,470
into consciousness yesterday walking

136
00:05:59,450 --> 00:05:57,060
high on the Devon cliffs with the

137
00:06:01,969 --> 00:05:59,460
seagulls crying overhead the grass

138
00:06:04,850 --> 00:06:01,979

brushing against my boots was so well

139

00:06:06,740 --> 00:06:04,860

grassy it was green and lush and

140

00:06:11,480 --> 00:06:06,750

glistening and changing all the time as

141

00:06:15,170 --> 00:06:11,490

I strode along this grassiness was my

142

00:06:18,589 --> 00:06:15,180

experience only I had just this vision

143

00:06:20,839 --> 00:06:18,599

from just this point of view yet I also

144

00:06:23,240 --> 00:06:20,849

believe that I have objectively realize

145

00:06:25,129 --> 00:06:23,250

that taken light and objectively

146

00:06:29,480 --> 00:06:25,139

existing brain cells in my head that

147

00:06:31,219 --> 00:06:29,490

make me see but how can this be how can

148

00:06:33,830 --> 00:06:31,229

objective things like brain cells

149

00:06:35,689 --> 00:06:33,840

produce subjective experiences like the

150

00:06:38,689 --> 00:06:35,699

feeling that I am striding through the

151
00:06:41,029 --> 00:06:38,699
grass and that of course is the problem

152
00:06:44,629 --> 00:06:41,039
of consciousness for philosophy of mind

153
00:06:48,230 --> 00:06:44,639
for psychology how is it that brain

154
00:06:51,559 --> 00:06:48,240
cells hardwired functional kinds of

155
00:06:53,659 --> 00:06:51,569
entities in a physical brain how can

156
00:06:56,420 --> 00:06:53,669
they produce the experiences we have

157
00:06:58,610 --> 00:06:56,430
when we have a conscious experience

158
00:06:59,959 --> 00:06:58,620
there seems to be a disconnect and it's

159
00:07:01,879 --> 00:06:59,969
been addressed in a couple of different

160
00:07:04,249 --> 00:07:01,889
ways David Shaw more calls it almost

161
00:07:06,080 --> 00:07:04,259
calls it the hard problem the problem to

162
00:07:11,600 --> 00:07:06,090
try and figure out how you can explain

163
00:07:15,439 --> 00:07:11,610

how things feel in terms of F MRI and

164

00:07:17,089 --> 00:07:15,449

EEG and firing of synapses and all of

165

00:07:20,689 --> 00:07:17,099

that kind of stuff that that we try and

166

00:07:23,420 --> 00:07:20,699

explain everything else in terms of joe

167

00:07:26,180 --> 00:07:23,430

levine calls it the explanatory gap but

168

00:07:27,920 --> 00:07:26,190

it is essentially the same problem okay

169

00:07:29,990 --> 00:07:27,930

so one

170

00:07:31,430 --> 00:07:30,000

of getting is that this was by thomas

171

00:07:33,740 --> 00:07:31,440

nagel had this interesting little

172

00:07:36,050 --> 00:07:33,750

article ii basically what is it like to

173

00:07:37,760 --> 00:07:36,060

be a bat and so oftentimes people refer

174

00:07:41,240 --> 00:07:37,770

to consciousness as the experience of

175

00:07:44,779 --> 00:07:41,250

what it is like to be you or to be me or

176

00:07:46,670 --> 00:07:44,789

to be anyone else they the interesting

177

00:07:48,560 --> 00:07:46,680

metaphor here was okay a bat there's a

178

00:07:50,749 --> 00:07:48,570

certain way it is to be a bat and it's

179

00:07:52,340 --> 00:07:50,759

not like being a human and yet the

180

00:07:57,110 --> 00:07:52,350

things that distinguish being a bat from

181

00:07:59,930 --> 00:07:57,120

being a human are these kind of non

182

00:08:02,029 --> 00:07:59,940

definable things experience what they

183

00:08:04,999 --> 00:08:02,039

call phenomenal experiences or quelea

184

00:08:06,529 --> 00:08:05,009

house i'll use the term very often here

185

00:08:09,439 --> 00:08:06,539

okay so these are the things that go

186

00:08:11,839 --> 00:08:09,449

into making up what it's like experience

187

00:08:13,700 --> 00:08:11,849

alright perception the standard sensual

188

00:08:15,650 --> 00:08:13,710

perception the sensory input then

189

00:08:18,200 --> 00:08:15,660

processed by the brain and producing

190

00:08:21,050 --> 00:08:18,210

these experiences cognition the

191

00:08:23,240 --> 00:08:21,060

processing of information phenomenal

192

00:08:27,230 --> 00:08:23,250

experience the actual experiences we

193

00:08:29,529 --> 00:08:27,240

have of red or pain or the smell of

194

00:08:33,519 --> 00:08:29,539

cinnamon and those kinds of things and

195

00:08:36,019 --> 00:08:33,529

intentionality the the sense we have of

196

00:08:38,209 --> 00:08:36,029

relating to the rest universally a sense

197

00:08:41,810 --> 00:08:38,219

of about mrs. Brentano called it where

198

00:08:44,060 --> 00:08:41,820

when we regard a glass full of water we

199

00:08:46,490 --> 00:08:44,070

are aware of that thing as an object as

200

00:08:49,430 --> 00:08:46,500

an entity in itself sitting there in a

201
00:08:51,320 --> 00:08:49,440
way that isn't isn't expressible we just

202
00:08:52,820 --> 00:08:51,330
we just know it's there and we're aware

203
00:08:56,960 --> 00:08:52,830
of that that's a kind of aboutness that

204
00:08:58,699 --> 00:08:56,970
is the root of intentionality so we

205
00:09:00,290 --> 00:08:58,709
address the first question very

206
00:09:02,329 --> 00:09:00,300
inadequately what is consciousness let's

207
00:09:03,740 --> 00:09:02,339
talk about this a second question that's

208
00:09:06,710 --> 00:09:03,750
perhaps more important to this lecture

209
00:09:09,110 --> 00:09:06,720
why is consciousness in trouble why is

210
00:09:11,120 --> 00:09:09,120
it that conscious and the consciousness

211
00:09:14,750 --> 00:09:11,130
needs hope why is it the consciousness

212
00:09:17,569 --> 00:09:14,760
needs help why is sigh not of any help

213
00:09:18,920 --> 00:09:17,579

to consciousness what's the problem okay

214

00:09:21,740 --> 00:09:18,930

so here's the threat to consciousness

215

00:09:24,290 --> 00:09:21,750

well the threat conscious rather is the

216

00:09:27,170 --> 00:09:24,300

threat to mind itself it goes back to a

217

00:09:30,350 --> 00:09:27,180

much bigger argument whether mind just

218

00:09:32,480 --> 00:09:30,360

is the brain whether what we perceive as

219

00:09:35,180 --> 00:09:32,490

our mental experiences are nothing more

220

00:09:37,190 --> 00:09:35,190

than the end product of a whole bunch of

221

00:09:39,590 --> 00:09:37,200

neuronal firings and electrochemical

222

00:09:41,150 --> 00:09:39,600

processes and and stimulation

223

00:09:43,100 --> 00:09:41,160

stimulation of nerve

224

00:09:46,189 --> 00:09:43,110

and all that kind of thing if the mind

225

00:09:48,290 --> 00:09:46,199

is only that then it's just the brain or

226

00:09:49,999 --> 00:09:48,300

whether the mind itself is something

227

00:09:53,059 --> 00:09:50,009

unique and something over and above that

228

00:09:55,430 --> 00:09:53,069

at least in some respects and the fight

229

00:09:56,949 --> 00:09:55,440

started out with just mind vs brain way